



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

## NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **DWR Announces \$150 Million Available for Central Valley Urban Flood Protection Projects**

**SACRAMENTO** -- Supporting goals set forth in Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr.'s California Water Action Plan, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) has announced \$150 million is now available to Sacramento and San Joaquin valley agencies seeking to reduce flood risk in cities and suburbs.

"California, even in the midst of a severe drought, remains at risk for catastrophic flooding," said Gary Bardini, DWR Deputy Director for Integrated Water Management. "DWR is moving forward to support the Governor's call for an integrated, multi-benefit approach to improving our flood management system as we help urban areas of the Central Valley achieve protection from a 200-year flood."

The funding will help local Central Valley agencies meet the cost of repairing and improving levees, weirs and bypasses, and improving or adding new infrastructure to provide a higher level of flood protection for development behind Federal-State levees.

There are between 13,000 and 14,000 miles of levees in California. In the 1950s, the State committed to maintain about 1,600 miles of federal levees in the Central Valley; these levees are called Federal-State levees. Local agencies originally built the levees, and today, local agencies are responsible for maintaining these levees in coordination with DWR and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. These levees protect not only local lives, property, infrastructure, and farms, but are part of California's water delivery system.

Local agencies in the Central Valley with the authority to implement flood projects are eligible for the state funding. DWR seeks to invest in projects that provide multiple benefits – such as improving public safety and expanding wildlife habitat – and also improve a region's ability to cope with the larger storms and flood flows expected due to climate change.

DWR's urban flood risk reduction grants align with Governor Brown's strategy of prioritizing flood protection funding and supporting multi-benefit water projects. As described in his California Water Action Plan, available here:

[http://resources.ca.gov/docs/california\\_water\\_action\\_plan/Final\\_California\\_Water\\_Action\\_Plan.pdf](http://resources.ca.gov/docs/california_water_action_plan/Final_California_Water_Action_Plan.pdf), an estimated \$50 billion is needed to reduce flood risk statewide. The administration will focus on highest-risk areas and develop proposals to fund projects through a combination of financing options.

The local projects selected for state funding "will not only improve public safety," said Bardini, "but will also foster environmental stewardship and support economic sustainability."

The funding comes from the current legislative appropriation of the 2006 Disaster Preparedness and Flood Prevention Bond Act (Proposition 1E). It will be distributed through a competitive proposal process managed by DWR's Urban Flood Risk Reduction Program. Conceptual proposals are due March 9, 2015. DWR expects to announce initial commitments of grant funds in May 2015. Those agencies whose projects are selected will be asked to submit a full project application, due later in 2015.

DWR's Urban Flood Risk Reduction Program was created following the adoption of the 2012 Central Valley Flood Protection Plan, which defined the State's investment priorities. The program has evolved from an earlier DWR program developed after the passage of Propositions 1E and 84. The earlier program funded eight projects, including the setting back of a Feather River levee that created wildlife habitat and improved flood protection for Marysville and Yuba City and levee improvements that provide 200-year flood protection levels in the Natomas area of Sacramento.

The current solicitation of proposals is for projects beginning in the Fiscal Year 2014-15 funding cycle. Additional funding may become available in future years should the Legislature approve additional appropriations from Proposition 1E.

For more information on the UFRR program as well as a downloadable Proposal Solicitation Package with program and cost share guidelines, visit DWR's website at <http://www.water.ca.gov/floodmgmt/fpo/guidelines/>.

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*The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood management and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.*